

# Study on the Structure and Evolution of the Buddhism-Related Idioms From the Perspective of Rhythm

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## ABSTRACT

Chinese idioms are affected by many factors in the formation process. This article analyzes the structure and evolution of Buddhist idioms from the perspective of prosody, and demonstrates the strong effect of prosody on Chinese word formation. First, this article will use the theory of prosody to analyze the Buddhist idioms included in the "Xinhua Dictionary of Idioms". Secondly, it will take "dang tou bang he(a sharp warning)" as an example to analyze the formation of the idiom of Buddhism, as well as some problems in the etymology and dictionary interpretation of "dang tou bang he".

**Keywords:** Buddhism-related idioms, structure, rhythm, etymology, dang tou bang he

## I. INTRODUCTION

After Buddhism was introduced into China, it had a great influence on Chinese vocabulary. Existing research results usually refer to Buddhism-related words collectively as "Buddha source words." Li Yunfu (2013) distinguished between "Buddhism-originated words" and "Buddhism-related words", thinking that "Buddhism-originated words" are "foreign words", and "Buddhism-related words" use the original morphemes in Chinese to construct new words constructed by word methods according to Chinese itself, or let original words in Chinese extend new meanings, so as to express new things from Buddhism. In this article, "Buddhism-related idioms" refer to idioms produced by combining Chinese morphemes with Buddhism as an external condition or opportunity.

## II. RHYME AND THE STRUCTURE OF BUDDHISM-RELATED IDIOMS

Whether the idiom forms of three syllables and above is a word or a phrase is closely related to its prosodic structure.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Remarks: The modern Chinese examples in this article are all from the CCL Modern Chinese Corpus of Peking University; the Buddhist literature use cases are all from the China Electronic Buddhist Scripture Association "CBETA Electronic Buddhist Scriptures Integration June 2016"; the non-Buddhist ancient literature classics are all from the "Chinese Basic Ancient Books Database"; The idioms are all from the "Xinhua Dictionary of Idioms' List of Buddhist Idioms" compiled by Wang Xin (2016).

### A. Four-character Buddhism-related idioms

The four-character Buddhism-related idioms occupy a larger proportion and contain seven structures:

The joint structure is divided into "single-layer joint structure" and "double-layer joint structure". The former includes "生老病死 (shēng lǎo bìng sǐ, means birth, aging, sickness and death)", "梦幻泡影 (mèng huàn pào yǐng, means bubble dream)", etc., presenting a "2+2" form, which embodies the "ontology" structure of Chinese phonetics. The latter has a large number, such as "不即不离 (bù jí bù lí, means being neither too familiar nor too distant), 你死我活 (nǐ sǐ wǒ huó, means fighting at outrace), 装模作样 (zhuāng mú zuò yàng, means putting on an act)", etc., and its internal structure is in the forms of "subject predicate/subject predicate, subordinate/subordinate, verb object/verb object, conjunction predicate/conjunction predicate, verb object/conjunction predicate", etc.

Among the subject-predicate structure, two-syllable subject structures such as "飞蛾扑火 (fēi é pū huǒ, means seeking one's own doom)" are the most common, which are generally in the form of [2+2] (compound prosodic words composed of two feet). In addition, there are also monosyllable subject structures such as "话不投机 (huà bù tóu jī, means mistiming one's remarks)" and "火烧眉毛 (huǒ shāo méi mao, means the most urgent situation)", forming the form of [1+3].

Subordinate structure, whether it is in the middle or the adverbial, has formed a [2+2] form in which modifier modifies the central word such as "本来面目 (běn lái miàn mù, means the original appearance), 不二

法门 (bù èr fā mén, means the one and the only way), 半路出家 (bàn lù chū jiā, means switching to a new profession), and 当头棒喝 (dāng tóu bàng hè, means a sharp warning)" and idioms like these.

Supplementary structure, there are only a few examples such as "春寒料峭 (chūn hán liào qiào, means that there is a chill in the air in early spring), and 守口如瓶 (shǒu kǒu rú píng, means to keep one's mouth shut)", which are obviously the form of [2+2], the most natural rhythmic structure of four syllables; the idioms like "打成一片 (dǎ chéng yī piàn, means playing well with others), 饥不择食 (jī bù zé shí, means that one is too hungry to be choosy about his food)" etc., are the form of [1+3].

The verb-object structure, including "遁入空门 (dùn rù kōng mén, means becoming a monk or nun, 大显神通 (dà xiǎn shén tōng, means giving full play to one's remarkable skill)", etc., and the structure of "adverbial modifier and central word + attribute and central word", are belonging to the form of [2+2].

The concatenation structure includes "作茧自缚 (zuò jiǎn zì fù, means getting enmeshed in a web of one's own spinning, 借花献佛 (jiè huā xiàn fó, means offering a present to a guest with other people's things)", etc., forming the form of [2+2].

In addition to the above structure, there are other structures such as "聚沙成塔 (jù shā chéng tǎ, means that grains of sand can be grouped together to form a pagoda)", namely the form of [1+1+2]. According to the derivation principle one of natural feet, a single syllable does not make a foot. Among the four-character words, the form of [2+2] is the most natural combination. Most of the feet in Chinese daily spoken and prose are realized under the constraints of syntax, vocabulary and semantics and their interaction with rhyme. Natural feet do not act passively. People usually pronounce the form of [1+3] such as "打成一片" and the form of [1+1+2] such as "聚沙成塔" as the form of [2+2].

#### B. Other Buddhism-related idioms

There are only a few cases of five, six, seven, and eight characters above the four-character form.

According to the derivation rule of natural feet, two syllables and three syllables can constitute independent feet. The five-character patterns such as "杀人不眨眼 (shā rén bù zhǎ yǎn, means killing without batting an eye)" and "临时抱佛脚 (lín shí bào fó jiǎo, means making efforts at the last moment)" constitute the form of [2+3]. Since there is no prosodic morphological structure in the form of [1#2] or [2#1], "不眨眼" and "抱

佛脚" are super feet (super rhythmic words). "不眨眼" can be understood as the prosodic adhesion group consisting of the prosodic adhesive word "不" and the prosody word "眨眼", reflecting the influence of the "rightward feet".

Since the six-character pattern "家丑/不可外扬 (jiā chǒu bù kě wài yáng, means that family troubles are not a thing to be talked about in public)" is a subject-predicate structure, the combination of "不可" and "外扬" is more closely combined, making the entire syllable into the [2+[2+2]] format, which is the most natural rhythm of the six-character pattern that conforms to the natural feet.

When the seven characters are combined, the most natural rhythm is [[2/2]+3]. "不看僧面看佛面 (bù kàn sēng miàn kàn fó miàn, means doing something out of consideration for somebody else)" and "解铃还须系铃人 (jiě líng hái xū xì líng rén, means that it is better for the doer to undo what he has done)" both constitute the form of [2+2+3]. "不看" is a syntactic prosodic word composed of two syllables, and the verb "看" and "僧面" constitute the "super foot". "解铃还须系铃人" is the same as above, which conforms to the derivation rule 1 of natural feet (monosyllable form is not enough to form an independent pitch) and derivation rule 5 (in any odd-numbered character string, the pure prosodic structure allows at most one three-syllable foot).

The eight-character pattern such as "不经/一事, 不长/一智 (bù jīng yī shì, bù zhǎng yī zhì, means a fall in the pit, a gain in the wit), 闭门/造车, 出门/合辙 (bì mén zào chē, chū mén hé zhé, means to close the door and build the carriage, and when the carriage is pushed out, it matches the wheel marks of other cars)" is a double-layered joint structure, composed of two compound prosody words, forming the form of [2/2+2/2]. Among them, words such as "苦海 (kǔ hǎi, means abyss of misery)" and "屠刀 (tú dāo, means butcher's knife)" are vocabulary words, and words such as "闭门" and "造车" are syntactic words. In addition, in "苦海无边, 回头是岸 (kǔ hǎi wú biān, huí tóu shì àn, means delivering oneself from the endless sea of tribulations by repenting)", "是" is the adhesive word, and "是岸" is the prosodic adhesion group formed to meet the requirements of rhythm.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the structure of almost all Buddhism-related idioms conforms to the basic and derived rules of "natural feet".

### III. RHYTHM AND THE FORMATION PROCESS OF BUDDHISM-RELATED WORDS

Yan Qiamao and Jing Yaling (2008) examined the four-character phonetic forms. No matter how different their internal structures are, people are accustomed to reading them as the rhythm patterns of "two-two". Shi Guanghui and Tang Shipu (2017) believed that, influenced by factors such as rhythm and diphony, Buddhist figurative expressions finally solidified into common Chinese idioms because the dual syllable of Chinese words is related to the transition of ancient and modern Chinese steps (from prosodic feet to syllable feet).[3]

In the following, the author will take the Buddha-related idioms "当头棒喝" as an example to analyze the influence of rhythm on the structural stereotype of the Buddha-related idioms.

"当头棒喝" is a word that appeared in the Buddhist scriptures of China after Buddhism was introduced to China. The Tang and Song Dynasties Zen quotations began to have records about "当头棒喝". At that time, it had not been finalized. Due to the effect of "conceptualization", words such as "棒喝 (bàng hè)", "棒头喝下 (bàng tóu hè xià)", "一棒一喝 (yí bàng yí hè)" and "棒喝交驰 (bàng hè jiāo chí)" appeared to express the same concept. Non-Buddhist texts first appeared in the Ming Dynasty.

#### A. The formation process of "dang tou bang he"

At the beginning of its creation, "当头棒喝" was an individual and sporadic expression, and "棒" and "喝" generally appeared separately. Such as:

"Quotations from the Zen Master Huizhao in Linji, Zhenzhou" in the Tang Dynasty: "道得也三十棒下。(When understanding the Tao, the person needs to undergo thirty bastinado.)"

The twentieth volume of "Quotations from Zen Master Dahui Pujue" compiled by Shi Yunwen in Song Dynasty: "德山见僧入门便棒。临济见僧入门便喝。(When the monk entering Deshan, they will undergo the bastinado. When the monk entering Linji, they will undergo the reproach.)"

The initial expressions related to "当头棒喝" first appeared in the Tang Dynasty, and were frequently used in the Song Dynasty. Many expressions were formed before the final finalization:

1) *The disyllabic word "bang he" after "lexicalization"*: The word "棒" and "喝" form the two-syllable rhyme word "棒喝", which was first seen in the Buddhist scriptures of the Tang Dynasty and was more

common in the Buddhist scriptures of the Song Dynasty. For example:

Chu Yuan Collection "Quotations from Zen Master Fenyang Wude" in Song Dynasty: "今日再相逢问古人，以棒喝接人。(When we meet again, we ask the ancient, and we should encounter each other with bastinado and reproach.)"

In addition, the synonymous and reversed word "喝棒" of "棒喝" was also used in the language community during the same period.

"喝棒" was first seen in "Heding Tiantai Sansheng Erhe Poem Collection • Hanshan Singhe Preface" (Tang). After the Tang Dynasty, it also appeared scatteredly in Buddhist scriptures of Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties, such as:

Mu'an Shanqing's "Zu Ting Shi Yuan" volume 6: "当作喝棒。见广灯。(There should be reproach and bastinado. See the words in Guangdeng.)"

From the perspective of usage time, "喝棒" and "棒喝" coexist for a long time. But on the whole, "棒喝" is used more frequently than "喝棒" in ancient literature, and gradually replaced "喝棒" in the process of the usage of language communities.

In addition, the combination of "棒" and "喝" also appears in some four-character words or phrases. For example:

一棒一喝

Shi Huiran's "Quotations of the Zen Master Huizhao in Linji, Zhenzhou" in Tang Dynasty: "每恨临济一言一句、一棒一喝。(Everytime I remember the words and warnings in Linji.)"

棒棒喝喝 (bàng bàng hè hè)

Shan Jian in Ming Dynasty said "The Preface to the Compilation of Quotations from the Guting Zen Master": "棒棒喝喝，四方八面。(Warnings come from all directions.)"

From the separate use of "棒" and "喝" to the appearance of the four-character words "一棒一喝" and "棒棒喝喝", the words "棒" and "喝" often appear together, creating conditions for their combination and solidification. The forming process of "棒喝" is influenced by both rhythm and lexicalization.

2) *Expression form composed of "bang he"*: 棒喝交驰 (bàng hè jiāo chí)

Shi Xingxiu of Yuan Dynasty wrote "Cong Rong An Record 6 Volumes" Volume 3: "无手行拳。饶棒喝交

驰。(Fisting in bare hands, there is still bastinado and reproach.)"

棒喝交加 (bàng hè jiāo jiā)

The tenth volume of "Yongjue Monk Guanglu" written by Yuanxian of the Ming Dynasty and Taobao of the Qing Dynasty: 诸祖教人, 或用言说, 或用棒喝交加。(The ancestors taught people, either with words or with bastinado and reproach.)

棒喝交下 (bàng hè jiāo xià)

The Jing Zhuji's "Five Lantern Meeting Yuan Sululue" Volume 3: 时或棒喝交下。一语不少贷。(Sometimes the bastinado and reproach are together, being a severe warning.)

棒喝交参 (bàng hè jiāo cān)

Ming Tong Rong Collection "Wu Deng Yan Tong" Volume 24: 棒喝交参。意旨如何。(The bastinado and reproach are together and what are the meaning?)

Among the above expressions, "棒喝交驰" is used most frequently. In addition, there are expressions such as "棒喝交并 (bàng hè jiāo bìng)" and "棒喝交时 (bàng hè jiāo shí)", but these are rare in Buddhist scriptures.

3) *Forms of expression related to "dang tou yi bang"*: According to documentary records, the first thing that appeared was the "劈脊一棒(pī jí yī bàng, the same meaning as 当头棒喝)" in Song Dynasty.

劈脊一棒

"Quotations from Zen Master Shixi Xinyue" compiled by Song Shixi and Xinyue, Zhu Xian et al.: "劈脊一棒。我亦不惜。(A sharp warning against spine, I won't be mean on it.)"

In addition, there have also been related three-character forms:

当头棒 (dāng tóu bàng)

The fifth volume of "Tiantong Monk's Guide to Rescue", written by Yuan Wu of Ming Dynasty and edited by Zhen Qi: 待潭吉拟议。即当头棒曰。(When Tan Ji was going to discuss, it will be sharp warning.)

Related four-character forms appeared in large numbers during the Ming and Qing Dynasties:

劈头一棒 (pī tóu yī bàng)

Jie Xianzhuo's "Zhanmen Training Theory" in Ming Dynasty: "或拦胸把住。逼其下语。或劈头一棒。(Or discourage them and make them to make explanations. Or give them a beat in head.)"

蓦头一棒 (mò tóu yī bàng)

Ming Tong Rong Collection "Wu Deng Yan Tong" Volume 24: 师蓦头一棒。僧无语。(The master beat the monk right in his head and the monk had nothing to say.)

拦头一棒 (lán tóu yī bàng)

The fifteenth volume of Shi Dazhen's collection of "Zheng Yuan Lue Ji": 拦头一棒。当下瓦解冰消。(Beating right in head, it faded right away.)

回头一棒 (huí tóu yī bàng)

The second volume of "Quotations from Zen Master Nei Shao" by Shi Zhaowei in Qing Dynasty: 须是直入汝。若转脑回头一棒。(You must take it directly. You will get a sharp warning if you rethink it.)

一棒当头 (yī bàng dāng tóu)

The tenth volume of "Quotations from Zen Master Miyun" edited by Yuan Wushuo of Ming Dynasty and Ru Ying et al.: "正中偏。一棒当头。绝谓言。(It is like a beat right in head, being precious words.)

According to documentary records, the first appearance of "当头一棒" also appeared during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. It can be seen that the related vocabulary forms such as "当头一棒" and "蓦头一棒, 劈头一棒, 当头棒, 拦头一棒" and other related vocabulary forms coexisted in the Ming and Qing dynasties. However, as the frequency of use of "当头一棒" has become higher, and restricted by economic principles and other related factors, language communities have gradually abolished multiple forms of expressing the same or related concepts. Only "当头一棒" remains in the CCL(Chinese common language) modern Chinese corpus.

4) *The final form of "dang tou bang he"*: The expressions related to "当头棒喝" are:

棒喝当头 (bàng hè dāng tóu)

There are only some records in non-Buddhist texts during the Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China. Such as:

In the Qing Dynasty, Xu Yan wrote "20 Volumes of Putuo Mountain History", in Volume 15: "字字解脱。六尘棒喝当头。(Every word of Liu Chen is a warning in the head.)

棒头大喝 (bàng tóu dà hè)

There is only one case in non-Buddhist texts. For example:

The 70th chapter of "100 Chapters of the Wizard of Oz" by Li Baichuan in the Qing Dynasty: "模糊刀头一落, 正是与你做棒头大喝耳。(In the dizzy the blade cutting

down the head, that is right when talking to you in a loud voice.)"

棒头喝下 (bàng tóu hè xià)

"Quotations from the Zen Master Huizhao in Linji, Zhenzhou" in the Tang Dynasty: "棒头喝下剿绝凡情, 电掣星驰卒难构副。(The beat in head wipes out every feeling, rushing to death is difficult to realize the reality.)"

There is also an example in non-Buddhist literature, such as:

Qing Hu Pin's essay "Shanyou Rock Carvings Series 40 Volumes" Volume 25: 棒头喝下, 不涉廉纖禅板蒲团 (This is a sharp warning, and it is a step to realize Zen).

当头棒喝 (dāng tóu bàng hè)

The final form of "当头棒喝" has only one case in the Buddhist scriptures:

King Hengyan of the People's Republic of China wrote "Putuo Luoia New Records" Volume 11: "若设公堂, 亦可以作当头棒喝。(If there is a public court, it can also be used as a sharp warning.)"

It appears more in non-Buddhist texts in Ming and Qing Dynasties.

From the above example, it can be seen that in the process of forming the Buddhism-related idioms "当头棒喝", it has gone through a very unstable stage, and many variants have appeared. The CCL modern Chinese corpus only has "当头一棒" and "当头棒喝", and its variant form "一棒一喝" has only one example, and it is a Buddhist corpus.

#### B. The etymology and semantics of "dang tou bang he"

1) *Etymological issues*: Judging from the current collection of several large dictionaries, the etymologies of the two great Buddhist teachings of "棒" and "喝" are roughly the same, but they are both the earliest sources of the idiom "当头棒喝". "Chinese Dictionary" does not mention it. "Buddhist Origin of the Sayings" only recorded the origin of "棒" and "喝". In Ding Fubao's "Buddhism Dictionary", the idiom "当头棒喝" only mentions that "棒始于德山, 喝来自临济 (bang starts in Deshan, and he comes from Linji)" without specific documentary evidence. "A Great Dictionary of Chinese Idioms Sources" also mentions the titles of "德山棒" and "临济喝" (means that the word bang starts in Deshan, and he comes from Linji) without specific etymological evidence. The "Idioms Dictionary of Multifunctional Classification in Terms of Meaning" single quoted

Song Shi Daoyuan's "Jing De Zhuan Deng Lu", which is obviously too late compared to the etymology cited in "Buddhist Origin of the Sayings". Zhu Ruiwen's "Buddhist Idioms" pointed out that "the first person to use the "喝法 (he fa, method of shout for warning)" was Master Mazu Daoyi", and quoted the "Jing De Zhuan Lan Lu". Zhu Ruiwen pointed out in his earlier monograph "Idioms and Buddhism" that "'棒' method comes from the Zen Master Deshan Yijian of the Qingyuan IV", but there is no specific documentary evidence. Zhu Ruiwen's point of view is the same as that of "Buddhist Origin of the Sayings". In addition, "Dictionary of Buddhism", "Zen Dictionary" and "The Origin of words" are not included.

After consulting and sorting out Buddhist scriptures, the author believes that the Buddhism concept of "当头棒喝" first appeared in the Tang Dynasty, and has gone through a long period of "conceptualization" until the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

2) *Semantic issues*: Contrast with "Chinese Dictionary", "Chinese Idioms Dictionary", "Buddhist Origin of the Sayings", "Buddhism Dictionary", "A Great Dictionary of Chinese Idioms Sources", "Idioms Dictionary of Multifunctional Classification in Terms of Meaning", "Buddhist Idioms", "Idioms and Buddhism", "Modern Chinese Dictionary (Seventh Edition)" and other large Chinese dictionaries, found that the interpretations are not unified, and there are some problems:

First, the interpretations of various dictionaries are not completely consistent. "Modern Chinese Dictionary (Seventh Edition)", "Buddhist Idioms", "Buddhist Origin of the Sayings", "Chinese Dictionary", "Buddhism Dictionary" have the same meanings in Buddhist scriptures, while "Chinese Idioms Dictionary" and "A Great Dictionary of Chinese Idioms Sources" and "Idioms Dictionary of Multifunctional Classification in Terms of Meaning" are different from the formers. In addition, Zhu Ruiwen's "Buddhist Idioms" on the interpretation of "当头一棒" is inconsistent with the earlier monograph "Idioms and Buddhism", and is more general. Regarding the semantics of modern Chinese, the dictionaries are relatively consistent, but there are some differences.

Second, the interpretation of various dictionaries has the problem of incomplete meaning. Such as:

"当头棒喝" has the following meanings in Zen quotations:

- A metaphor for someone's vigilance ("Putuo Luoia Xinzhi Volume 11" by Wang Hengyan of the People's Republic of China);

- A metaphor for using a stick to hit the target object head-on or shout loudly to help him determine the truth (Ming Qi Biaoqia "Yuanshantang Qupin, Undivided Volumes");
- When Buddhist Zen monks receive people who come to study or treat students who are studying, they often use a stick to blow or shout loudly to promote their comprehension (Tang Zong Mishu, Song Zixuan Ji Tang Zong Mishu Qingda Binke Hui "Jingang Jing Shuji Kehui").

In short, Buddhism emphasizes enlightenment, intuition, and mystery. "当头棒喝" means using actions to let students comprehend or determine the principles of Buddhism.

The meaning of "当头棒喝" in non-Buddha classics:

- A metaphor of a shock or warning that urges people to wake up (Volume 2 of "Hu Tianlu 3 Volumes" by Qing Baiyi Jushi);
- A metaphor of being severely hit due to some bad behavior (Qing Sun Baoxuan wrote "The Diary of Wangshanlu Undevided Volumes").

In addition, "当头棒喝" in modern Chinese has the following meanings:

- it is a metaphor of having received a serious warning;
- it is a metaphor of being warned or reminded because of something or a sentence;
- it emphasizes unexpected, sudden stimulation or shock;
- it means to prompt people to wake up, awaken, and suddenly realize a certain truth, etc.;
- it means to severely warn the other party;
- it means remind, mild warnings, etc.

The semantic items in modern Chinese corpus can also be subdivided from the semantic point of view.

#### IV. THE INFLUENCING FACTORS IN THE FORMATION OF THE BUDDHISM-RELATED IDIOMS

From the formation process of "当头棒喝", it can see the influencing factors of the generation and evolution of the Buddhism-related idioms.

##### A. The role of "vulgarization and heterogeneity"

Li Yunfu (2013) pointed out that in the process of evolution of Buddhism-related vocabulary, for some unintentional or intentional reason, it may appear a secular understanding different from the original

meaning of the word creation in the Buddhist world. This is vulgarization; vulgarization usually occurs at the morpheme level or morpheme relationship level, and the result often constitutes another homomorphic new word that is different from the original word of Buddhism, showing new word formation motivation and new word meaning, which is heterogeneity.

The formation of "当头一棒" and "当头棒喝" was influenced by "vulgarization and heterogeneity", which differentiated from a concept into two isomorphic words:

当头棒喝 1: Use stick or drink for beginners of Buddhism to help them understand the Dharma.

当头棒喝 2: a warning for enlightenment

当头一棒 1: Make a beat with stick or shout for beginners in Buddhism to help them understand the Dharma.

当头一棒 2: ①A metaphor for reminding people to understand; ②A metaphor for a sudden blow.

The above interpretations are derived from "Buddhist Origin of the Sayings" and "Modern Chinese Dictionary (Seventh Edition)"

##### B. Constraints of "natural feet"

Due to the role of rhythm and the superiority of the four-character structure, many non-four-character forms have moved closer to the four-character structure. One is to omit certain minor elements, such as some numerals and overlapping elements. The second is to add words to make the less than four-character form a four-character case, such as "当头棒" with the syllable "— " added. In addition, there have also been heteromorphic words such as "棒头喝下", "棒头大喝", "棒喝当头", and "棒喝交驰". It can be seen that the generation process of "当头棒喝" and "当头一棒" conforms to the prosodic word-building rules of compound prosodic words composed of two steps.

##### C. It is in line with the aesthetic psychology of Han people

Since the "Book of Songs", the four-character sentence pattern has been regarded as "orthodox". Liu Xie mentioned in "Wen Xin Diao Long • Ming Poems": "If you have a four-character body, then elegance is the foundation." In the long river of history, the Four Words did not disappear. Yan Qiamao and Jing Yaling (2008) believe that: "Four-character sentence pattern, as a pairwise syllable structure, just satisfies people's psychological appeal and rhythmic habits of 'even words can be stable'." The author believes that the Han people pay attention to symmetry, harmony, roundness, moderation, anaphora, four-character "two + two"

rhythm pattern, as well as typo rhyming (such as: ang), long and short tones interlaced. It just formed the effect of circular reference, harmony and melodiousness, neatness and order, just like the "tidy rule" of poetry, in line with the aesthetic psychology of Han people.

#### D. The role of economic principles and style

In use, some four-syllable words gradually abandoned some similar or related forms, leaving only their representative forms. On the one hand, it is due to economic principles. On the other hand, the function of style is the function of style. For example, the corpus sources of "一棒当头" and "当头一棒" come from ancient Chinese, and "当头一棒" conforms to the principle of written style of "spoken grammar as the basis". [1324] is the accent format of the idiom; [3124] is the colloquial format. Obviously, "当头一棒" is more in line with the accent format of the idiom. "当头棒喝" and "棒喝当头" are the same.

In addition, the final formation of Buddhism-related idioms is also affected by the "dualization". There are many factors that affect the formation of Buddhism-related idioms. The author believes that the most fundamental constraint is rhythm.

### V. CONCLUSION

From the formation process of "当头棒喝", it can be seen that the evolution of the Buddhism-related idioms has roughly gone through the processes of "conceptualization", "dual-syllabization", four-character compound prosodic structure, and vulgar dissociation. Its expression forms range from simple to multiple, and redundant expressions are discarded, and the more representative ones are chosen. At the same time, the semantics has changed from single to multiple, accompanied by the diminishing or even falling off of Buddhist cultural colors. In addition, Buddhism-related idioms such as "隔靴搔痒 (gé xuē sāo yǎng, means attempting an ineffective solution)", "瘦骨如柴 (shòu gǔ rú chái, means very skinny as firewood)", "无穷无尽 (wú qióng wú jìn, means infinite)", "千奇百怪 (qiān qí bǎi guài, means all sorts of strange things)", and "天女散花 (tiān nǚ sǎn huā, means the heavenly maids scatter blossoms)" have undergone similar evolution.

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